

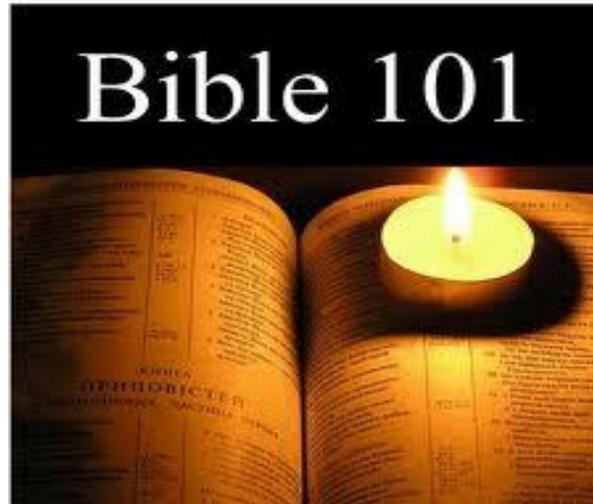
The Messenger

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
February 2014

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DISCOVERING THE BIBLE



February 5 - Getting Acquainted

It's the all-time best-seller since the beginning of printing. It has produced passionate controversy for centuries. What is the book that is like none other in the history of the world? Where did it come from? What does it consist of? Does it still speak to us today?

February 12 - The Old Testament

An ancient book? Yes, but far more! It's a kind of love letter and a still-living legacy that shaped the identity of a unique people. What about the Dead Sea Scrolls? The accurate preservation of the contents over millennia underscores the marvel of these writings.

February 19 - The New Testament

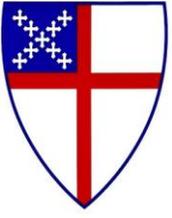
It's a book that centers on Jesus. But how do we know we have the actual words of Jesus? How were the books of the New Testament gathered and selected? What's it all about? How does the New Testament build upon but differ from the Old Testament?

February 26 - Survival, Spread, and Influence

Despite attempts of tyrants to destroy it, the Bible has endured and become the most translated and circulated book ever. It was translated into various art forms and given to us in English through heroic efforts. It's the book that influenced the lives that influenced the world.

All classes are held on Wednesdays in the Conference Room from 7:30pm – 9:00pm. Please email the rector (james.ross.mcd@gmail.com) or call (522-3906) if you wish to attend.

Greetings from Father James!



Dear Friends,

I have several things on my mind as we head into February.

First, I want to update you on the situation in the parish office. There will be three volunteers from the congregation in the office from 9am to noon each week. Carole Merrill-Mazurek will be there on Mondays; Jan Lovett on Wednesdays and Mary Ann Harrington on Fridays. They will be answering the phone, receiving visitors and generally being a presence in the office. Chris Jones has been sending out the weekly updates, as well as continuing to manage the web page and publishing other sundry items such as a parish directory. Denise Crates has assumed data entry for pledges. I have been putting together the Sunday bulletin (and others as needed). Cathy Knauf will continue to put together the Messenger as a volunteer, as well as manage the tuition payments for our First Friends' Nursery School. In the meantime, the Personnel Committee of the vestry is organizing for a search to fill this position.

Second, I want to thank all parish leaders who submitted reports for the Annual Meeting last month. Especially, I want to thank Chris Jones for compiling the reports into a very fine document. If you missed the Meeting, the report can be found on the parish web page. You will discover that we had a very busy year in 2013!

Finally, some thoughts on the near future. Ash Wednesday is rather late this year: March 5th. We will be giving a detailed description of our parish Lenten activities in the March Messenger, however, I want to hold up to your attention the Lenten study. We will meet on the five Sunday evenings of Lent for a simple bread and soup supper and a study of J.S. Bach's, St. Matthew Passion, a study of the last days of Jesus' life based on the text of [Matthew](#) 26–27. The video presenter is a dynamic and entertaining musicologist and composer who shows the relationship between the text and Bach's musical setting. He really brings the Passion to life! Please mark Sundays, March 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th and April 6th from 5:00pm to 7:00pm for an interesting and meaningful addition to your Lenten journey.

Peace,

James+

Youth Education at St. Stephen's Winter 2014

Building Faith with Fun



Contact Information:

Miranda Rand: mirandarand411@gmail.com

George Woodzell: gwwny@verizon.net

Peter Nelson: pnelson245@yahoo.com

We celebrated **Epiphany** in both the Sunday Friends and the Godly Play classrooms by welcoming Meg Dominguez, Education Manager at MiSci. Meg brought some interactive star-gazing tools to help us understand the placement of the stars and constellations in the January night sky and discussed how the Magi might have seen those stars and been guided by them on their journey to find the Christ child. We completed our Epiphany celebration by participating in the pot-luck luncheon. The Magi made an appearance and handed out gifts.



The rest of January found the **Sunday Friends** students studying John the Baptist and making a list of his attributes, using a craft project to learn about the evolution of a butterfly, from egg to caterpillar, to chrysalis, to hatched butterfly; and discussing what it means to trust.

Godly Play students reviewed the entire Christmas story from the annunciation through the flight into Egypt, using Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel frescoes as illustrations; learned the story of Jesus calming the storm and the story of his healing a paralyzed man.



Youth Group cooked and served an outstanding chicken dinner to the congregation as a thank you for 2013 Work Camp support, and showed a video of their work week. On February 2nd, they sold foot-long subs for \$7.50 each to help offset the cost of their 2014 mission trip.

Adult Education

Sunday Morning Adult Education:

Classes will be held on Sunday Mornings from 9:00-10:00AM in the Conference room.

Genesis: A Living Conversation

Bill Moyers gathers the voices of numerous thinkers and writers: novelists Mary Gordon and John Barth; theologians Elaine Pagels and Phyllis Trible; biblical critics Robert Alter (whose own translation of Genesis are published by Norton) and Walter Breuggeman; and cultural critics like Karen Armstrong and Carol Gilligan, among others, into a fascinating, often tendentious, conversation about the living character of stories that address everything from the creation of the world and the temptations of the first couple to the internecine struggles of Jacob's family and the slavery of Joseph.

Feb. 2 - God Wrestling: Apparently headed for his final comeuppance, the fugitive Jacob meets God in a dream and ultimately finds himself.

Feb. 9 – Exile: Gifted, talented, and handsome, Joseph survives slavery and exile by his wits. But his response to the advances made by his captor's wife raises troubling questions.

The Question of God

This course explores two diametrically opposed views of human existence through the lives of Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis. Both wrote passionately on the subject of God's existence, rigorously and relentlessly pursuing truth, and both displayed courage of conviction in the ways they lived their lives. Their intellectual work strives to answer not only what we should believe, but also how we should live.

Each class raises several fundamental questions: Does God exist? How does one decide what is moral? What does it mean to love your neighbor? How are we to understand suffering and death? Through dramatic storytelling and compelling re-creations, Freud and Lewis debate the answers to these questions, and a video panel of seven men and women, from diverse walks of life, confront these issues in their own lives.

Feb. 16 - Transcendent Experience: How much do our early childhood experiences shape our worldview? Sigmund Freud began his life in a traditional Jewish household surrounded by the archetypal figures he would one day write about, while “Jack” Lewis grew up in Belfast, with his brother as a constant companion. Freud and Lewis encountered loss early in life, but their reactions sent them on divergent paths. The panel discusses Freud and Lewis's early experiences, as well as their own; so will our class.

Feb. 23 - The Exalted Father: Do our early relationships color our attitudes in later life toward the concept of an ultimate authority? Bereft by his mother's death years earlier, Lewis witnesses brutality and harsh conditions in WWI that leave him furious at God. The tragedy of his disintegrating practice and dying father leads Freud on a journey of self-analysis, culminating in his conclusion that fear, longing, and admiration for our fathers are manifested in every religion as attitudes toward God. The panel discusses the role of human relationships in one's choice of worldview; so will our class.

Continued Adult Education



Between Athens.....and Jerusalem

A Seminar of Theological Reflection on the

Great Ideas of the Western World

Tuesday Mornings 10:30-Noon



Based on "The Great Ideas of Philosophy" by Professor Daniel N. Robinson

- February 2 **The Radical William James**
Mortally opposed to all block universes of certainty and theoretical hubris, James offered a quintessentially home-grown psychology of experience
- February 9 **William James's Pragmatism**
Working in the realm of common sense, James directed the attention of philosophy and science to that ultimate arena of confirmation in which our deepest and most enduring interests are found.
- February 16 **Wittgenstein and the Discursive Turn**
Meaning arises from conventions that presuppose not only a social world but a world in which we share the interests and aspirations of others.
- February 23 **Alan Turing in the Forest of Wisdom**
Turing is famous for breaking Germany's famed World War II Enigma code, but, as a founder of modern computational science, he also wrote influentially about the possibilities of breaking the mind's code.

To Contact Father James:
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Father James,
Rector

Inquirers' classes

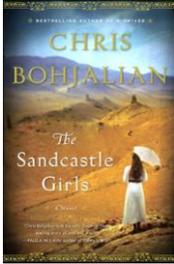
Inquirers' classes are intended to give prospective members an overview of how Episcopalians fit into the complex of protestant and catholic churches. Discussion topics include the world-wide Anglican Church, the National Episcopal Church, our own Diocese of Albany, our own parish of St. Stephen's and the relationship among all four. Discussions are candid and open.

This course is required of all adults who wish to be confirmed or received into the church, but is open to all members of the Parish Family. Confirmation will take place in late spring.

All classes take place in the rector's study from February 2nd - 23rd on Sunday afternoons from noon – 1:00pm. Please see or contact (522-3906, james.ross.mcd@gmail.com) with any questions.

Ministry Updates

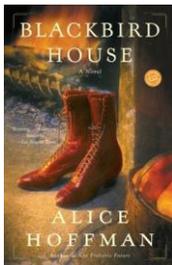
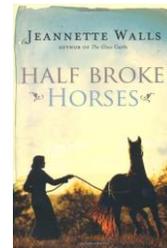
The 2014 St. Stephen's Book Club



Feb: *The Sandcastle Girls*
By Chris Bohjalian

March: *Half Broke Horses: A True Life Novel*
By Jeannette Walls

This will also be a game night!



April: *Blackbird House*
By Alice Hoffman

**We meet at 7:00pm on the second Tuesday of the Month
In the Teen Lounge
Next meeting is Tuesday, February 11th**

SICM NEWS

The February SICM assembly will be on Feb. 5th at Immanuel Lutheran Church on Union St. in Niskayuna. Refreshments are available at 6:45 and the meeting will begin at 7:00.

Our guest speaker will be the new Human Rights Commission Executive Director, Angelica Morris. She will be talking about the future direction of the commission, including the new End Poverty Schenectady coalition.

There will also be information about the SICM Service Saturdays in April and the Crop Walk in May.

If you can't join us look for information we'll be bringing on the information table in the nave extension.

Amy, Eunice and Marti



~ February 2014 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7:30am Morning Prayer Sundays 9:00 Nursery Care every Sunday	9:00am Morning Prayer – Mon-Sat					1
2 8:00&10:15 Sunday Eucharists 9:00 Sunday School/Adult Education 12:00pm Inquiry Class	3 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:30pm Parish Council Meeting	4 10:30am Seminar of Theological Reflection	5 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:00pm SICM Assembly 7:30pm-9:00pm Discovering the Bible 7:30pm Handbell Practice	6 10:00am Eucharist 7:30 Choir Practice	7 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group	8
9 8:00&10:15 Sunday Eucharists 9:00 Sunday School/Adult Education 12:00pm Inquiry Class	10 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:30pm Vestry Meeting	11 10:30am Seminar of Theological Reflection 4:00pm Book Club	12 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:30pm-9:00pm Discovering the Bible 7:30pm Handbell Practice	13 10:00am Eucharist 7:30 Choir Practice	14 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group	15
16 8:00&10:15 Sunday Eucharists 9:00 Sunday School/Adult Education 12:00pm Inquiry Class	17 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 6:30 Girl Scout Community Meeting 7:30 Communications Committee	18 10:30am Seminar of Theological Reflection	19 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 10:30am DOK 7:30pm-9:00pm Discovering the Bible 7:30pm Handbell Practice	20 10:00am Eucharist 7:30 Choir Practice	21 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group	22
23 8:00&10:15 Sunday Eucharists 9:00 Sunday School/Adult Education 12:00pm Inquiry Class	24 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:30 Worship Committee Meeting	25 10:30am Seminar of Theological Reflection	26 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group 7:30pm-9:00pm Discovering the Bible 7:30pm Handbell Practice	27 10:00am Eucharist 7:30 Choir Practice	28 8:30am Osteo Exercise Group	

February Anniversaries



Birthdays:

Feb 8 th	Patricia Jones
Feb 10 th	Claire Syta
Feb 12 th	Donald Regula
Feb 13 th	Dawn Rizzo
Feb 14 th	Marilyn Causey
Feb 18 th	Jane Tatge
Feb 19 th	Mary Alexander

February Anniversaries

Feb 21 st	Mary Kate Cestaro
Feb 23 rd	Mitchell Rigley
Feb 24 th	Pauline Northrop
Feb 25 th	Joan Halstead
Feb 28 th	Elizabeth Pratico
Weddings:	
Feb 7 th	Paul & Allison de Kanel
Feb 20 th	James & Lisa McDonald

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

1935 The Plaza, Schenectady, New York 12309

Church Staff

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The Church Office

Our office is located at 1229 Baker Avenue.
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If we are unable to answer your call, please leave a message.
We will call you back as soon as possible.

The Rector's email is: james.ross.mcd@gmail.com
Our website is <http://www.saintstephenschenelectady.org/>
Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SaintStephenschenelectady>

The Messenger is published September - June.
Please submit articles to Cathleen Knauf -
ssec.cathleen@gmail.com by the 22nd of the Month before.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1935 The Plaza
Schenectady, New York 12309

Saint Stephen's
Episcopal Church

progressive,
catholic, reformed

Holy Communion
Sunday 8:00 am and 10:15 am
Education Hour for all Ages – 9am

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